

Dear Honorable Members of the Planning and Development Committee,

I care about animals and I vote. Please accept this testimony in SUPPORT of HB 5170, An Act Concerning the Tethering and Sheltering of Dogs, which would improve the existing tethering law and also would require adequate shelter for dogs kept during extreme weather conditions.

It is a common misconception that dogs' fur enables them to withstand extreme cold better than humans. In fact, dogs of any breed who are exposed to extreme cold for long periods of time can and do suffer from hypothermia or death. Exposed skin like the nose, ears, and paw pads are highly susceptible to frostbite and can be permanently damaged. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) recommends that dogs, even thick-coated arctic breeds, should not be left outside during below freezing weather— and especially not without shelter that allows the dog to maintain normal body temperature.

See <https://www.avma.org/.../petcare/cold-weather-animal-safety>.

Thank you,
Fran Wiehn
Stonington